







# The A. M. E. Zion Quarterly Review

DAVID H. BRADLEY, Editor

P. O. Box 146, Bedford, Pa.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PICTURE—THE MADONNA OF THE STARS by Jacopo Tintoretto.....	58
PICTURE INTERPRETATION .....	59
By FLORENCE TURVEREY REEVES	
PICTURE WITH EXPLANATION, Everett Church of the Brethren Junior Choir.....	60
THE A.M.E. ZION QUARTERLY REVIEW GREET'S YOU AT CHRISTMAS.....	61
THIS ISSUE—THE EDITOR'S STATEMENT.....	62
CURRENT TRENDS IN CHURCH MUSIC .....	63
By ALLEN C. LANNON	
LITURGICAL ABUSES AND THE PRESENT STATE OF CHURCH MUSIC IN THE UNITED STATES.....	77
By EDWARD B. GAMMONS	
YOUTH CHOIRS IN THE CHURCH OF TODAY.....	90
By PAUL O. MANZ	
A CHILDREN'S CHOIR THAT'S MORE THAN ORNAMENTAL.....	100
OF HISTORICAL NOTE (THE EDITOR).....	102
EDITORIALS .....	105
LOOKING AHEAD IN BOOKS.....	109
IN AUDIO VISUAL AIDS .....	111

1954

## VOLUME LXV, No. 2

The A.M.E. Zion Quarterly Review was founded in 1890 by the late Bishop George Wylie Clinton, D. D. It is published by the Publishing Board of the A. M. E. Zion Church. David H. Bradley, Editor. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at Bedford, Pennsylvania, under the act of March 3, 1879.

Questions peculiar to the function of the minister will be answered promptly. All communications should be addressed to the editor.

Subscriptions: One year in advance—\$2.00; (Canada, \$2.10). Single copy—0.50; Foreign countries—\$2.25 per year.

Copywrited 1954

All rights reserved

A. M. E. Zion Quarterly Review



## THE MADONNA OF THE STARS



Photograph by courtesy of the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C.



## THE MADONNA OF THE STARS

Jacopo Tintoretto. 1518—1594.

Original: National Gallery, Washington, D. C.

For many years this exquisite picture hung in the home of Ralph Booth, Detroit publisher and newspaper man. But at that time it did not have the radiant loveliness it now possesses, for the entire background of the painting was plain and dark. When a picture is given to the National Gallery, it must be X-rayed to see if anything has been painted over any portion of it or to show up any other alteration from the original. When it was discovered that the dull dark paint did not belong there, art experts removed it and this lovely sky filled with light, stars, and angels emerged, truly a heavenly setting for the Virgin Mother and Child.

This Madonna and Child are not merely human but divine as well. As the Babe lies upon the lap of his Mother, she instinctively places her finger tips together in a quiet compelling act of worship. Her beautiful thoughtful face is exquisitely framed in the sheer transparent veil.

The Child lies quietly listening to the subtle and elusive forms that hover around as though they were conveying a definite message to him. While his eyes are thoughtful, there is no deep sadness in his expression, and there is even the suggestion of a smile about his lips. Although now the Mother hears the voices and feels the heavenly throng about, it is as though she sensed the angels and their message through the message to her Son., for her entire thought is preoccupied with him and his future. If she had not been certain before, she is now fully aware, as she looks upon him, of his divinity.

—Florence Reeves.

## REVIEWING THE NEWS

The recent hurricane damaged several Zion Churches in Eastern Carolina and Virginia. While it is hard to estimate the total damage, extensive destruction was experienced at Wakefield, Virginia; a seven hundred dollar damage at Metropolitan, Norfolk, Virginia; chimney damage at St. Thomas and numerous broken windows and roof damage to other churches.



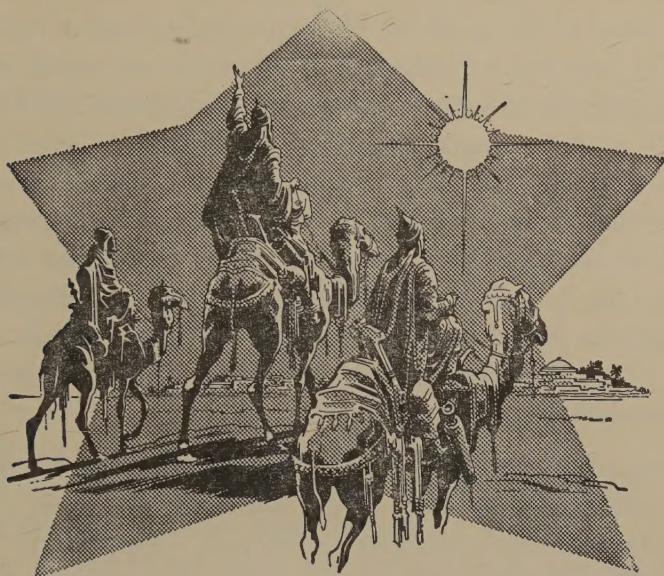
Several years ago the small A. M. E. Church in the village of Everett, Pa., was forced to close its doors. The town's always small Negro population had dwindled to not more than a half dozen families and the nearest sister church was some 40 miles away—too far for a sharing of a minister with that congregation. The ministers of the Church of the Brethren not only saw the need but moved to meet it not only by providing willing service whenever needed but by bringing fellowship and work within the church to those who cared to share in the Master's task. Today, under the Reverend Mock not only are children found in the Junior choir but the Senior organization is interracial as well. This is not an exceptional case for in at least two other situations the Church of the Brethren has come to the rescue of isolated Negro families and urged their active participation in the work of the church.

---

### REVIEWING THE NEWS

The son of America's first Brigadier General Davis, himself becomes a Brigadier General. And there no doubt will be others. Pennsylvania appointed its first State Patrolman who entered its training school recently. The governors of Virginia and North Carolina have appointed Commissions ostensibly to seek ways to disobey laws. (The Supreme Court's decision on integration of schools). The result has been significant hostile reaction on the Protestant Clergy.





### IT'S CHRISTMAS IN PENNSYLVANIA

And perhaps the major portion of our thoughts is given over to an humble spirit of thankfulness for the rich blessings God has showered upon us all. There is a natural, immediate thankfulness for the gift of health and activity—food, raiment and shelter. There is a deep thankfulness for peace—unbombed cities and communities—for the consecrated spirit of Christ in the hearts of our President, Dwight D. Eisenhower, and other members of our government—who have shown the spirit of working for the good of man rather than the ambitions of self. There is the gratitude for the fairmindedness and cooperation of men in high and low places, within and without the church, in pleasure, in business, in all our social relationships. There is the joy of work and service and sacrifice—all living epistles of the Christ Child in our American way of life.

To all of you then—from Pennsylvania—from Bedford—from this Editor's desk—come these fond good wishes of a high and meaningful Christmas season to our subscribers, our church leaders, our writers—the Staff of the Gazette, our publishers, and men of good will EVERYWHERE.

### IT'S CHRISTMAS

## THE EDITOR'S STATEMENT

In the issue of the A. M. E. Zion Quarterly Review which reached your desks in July you will recall that reference was made to the Bien-nial Meeting of the American Guild of Organists. At the time we carried that announcement we asked the Guild to give us printing rights of any significant addresses made at the Twin Cities meeting. We are grateful to the Guild that this was done thus bringing to you that which we feel is a Review worthy of the Christmas season. You will note that the A. G. O. has granted privilege to the following articles: Youth Choirs In The Church of Today, Current Trends in Church Music and Liturgical Abuses and The Present State of Church Music in The United States.

To bring other articles on the musical theme we have received permission to print A Children's Choir That's More Than Ornamental from Protestant Church Administration and Equipment. We hope, likewise, if there is space, to present another on Selection of Church Organs.

We sincerely urge the ministry of the church to find wide use for articles such as those we are printing. To aid many of you, an additional copy of this number may be secured by writing us enclosing five cents in stamps to cover cost of mailing.

To acquaint our membership with such church periodicals as the A. M. E. Zion Quarterly Review we are offering copies to any church making application, provided that not more than five churches receive these in any one quarterly mailing. Recently such a mailing was made to the thriving church in Erie, Pennsylvania.

---

"I believe that you, members of this convocation, spiritual leaders of a great world organization, together with your brethren of other faiths, can lead the way. The goal should be nothing short of inviting every single person in every single country in the world who believes in the power of a Supreme Being to join in a mighty, simultaneous, intense act of faith."

"If this mass dedication launched an unending campaign for peace, supported consequently by prayer, I am certain," said the President (Eisenhower), "wondrous results would ensue."

—From the Deering speech.



## CURRENT TRENDS IN CHURCH MUSIC

by

Allen C. Lannon

Professor of Church Music, Boston University  
Boston, Massachusetts

Practical people, I have been told,  
Weary of the sea for his waves go up and down  
Endlessly to no visible purpose;  
Tire of the tides, for the the tides are tireless, the tides  
Are well content with their own march-tune  
And nothing accomplished is no matter to them.  
It seems wasteful to practical people  
And that the nations labor and gather and dissolve  
Into destruction; the stars sharpen  
Their spirits of splendor, and then it dims, and the stars  
Darken; and that the spirit of man  
Sharpens up to maturity and cools dull  
With age, dies, and rusts out of service;  
And all these tidal gatherings, growth and decay,  
Shining and darkening, are forever  
Renewed; and the whole cycle impatiently  
Revolves, and all the past is the future:  
Make it a difficult world . . . . for practical people.

—Jeffers' Poem "Practical People"

The American public has grown so proud of its practicability that the very existence of a world of thought or of dreams is daily assailed by the Armies of practical persons who evaluate friendships in terms of possessions, government in terms of expediency, and culture in terms of marketable benefits. Reality has become an obsession; commercialism has seeped through the chinks in the house of art; the game of labeling is played with friendless ferocity in government, religion and education; the whole world shrieks its "hosannas" to the god of the here and now. Practicability has become a cry and code and a creed. Men have lost sight of distant horizons. Nobody writes for humanity, for civilization; they write for their country, their sect, to amuse their friends or annoy their enemies.

Yet there have always been voices to proclaim the ultimate prac-



ticability of spiritual values and the eventual triumph of ideas over action. The history of the world is the history of men and women who dared to make the impractical an accomplished fact. The *greater* practicability of life comes from a refusal to be circumscribed by time and place and a daring to drag the spirit from a convenient pigeonhole, neatly labeled. The world will not be preserved from self-destruction by college degrees, lesson plans, a drawing room culture, congressional committees, iron, bamboo or nylon curtains. The only hope for a world perched dangerously on the precarious balance of bombs is in the dedication to the job of making the impractical spiritual qualities part of a practical philosophy of life.

The here-and-now-ness of the present all too often obscures from our thinking the here-and-now-ness of the past and of the future. We see the religious creed, we observe the compartmentalization of religious life, we condemn the cultural manifestations of religion and all with some cause for the church is not blameless in the indictment of religion any more than the school is blameless in the indictment of education. T. S. Eliot levels a literary finger at the Church in his poem "The Hippopotamus":

"The Hippopotamus's day  
Is passed in sleep; at night he hunts;  
God works in a mysterious way—  
The Church can sleep and feed at once."

He sums it up in his incisive last stanza:

"He shall be washed as white as snow,  
By all the martyr'd virgins kist,  
While the True Church remains below  
Wrapt in the old miasmal mist."

The Church must somehow learn to face reality and tear itself away from the pastime of building the "Kingdom of Self" and labelling it the "Kingdom of God."

Only when the Church accepts the challenge to "train, improve and refine the mind, morals and taste" will it be fulfilling its obligations to the God it represents.

The Church and the Arts have not always been as widely separated as they are now. Culture and religion have been limbs of the same tree from the very beginning of human existence as an organized function. Government, music, literature, etc., developed out of the Jahweh worship of Israel. Early Greek drama, dance, and poetry centered around religious concepts. During the Middle Ages the



monasteries became havens for scholars, writers and musicians. Great works of Art were commissioned by the Church; architecture reached its full stature when applied to the needs of religion; literature was laboriously hand-copied; the first elements of musical notation were introduced; drama developed through the Miracles and Moralities. All this happened because the church was attempting to live up to its responsibility to the totality of life.

Somehow, with the growth of humanistic philosophy, the rebellion against a religious hierarchy, and an altered conception of the universe, it was inevitable that society should slowly revolve on its own axis and that the church should question the development of a secular culture. It is only recently, in point of history, that we have rejected the Puritan attitude and have begun to accept the principles of art as concentric to the sphere of religion.

Having said all this, let us now be practical and revert to the subject; yet, in reality, we have never been far from it, for it seems to me that all the current trends in church music are moving toward a more meaningful unity of religion and art. If the contemporary picture is discouraging it is so only because of its juxtaposition with the ideal, for, comparatively, it is quite evident that American church music is contributing more significantly to the life of the individual and to the life of the church than it ever has in our rather short history as a nation.

What are these trends, and how will they ultimately affect church music?

One of the most exciting trends is toward an improvement of technique. The American Guild of Organists pioneered in this and still is the only national body which works in this direction. But now there are other organizations and institutions which help carry the increasingly heavy burden. Colleges and universities have recognized the needs in the fields by granting degrees with church music majors or by offering elective courses in some phase of church music history and literature. Course offerings range from one general course in some small liberal arts colleges to as many as fifteen separate fields of study in more specialized music schools. Graduate work is available in many colleges and universities leading to Master's and Doctor's degrees with a church music emphasis.

Study in church music is not limited to degree candidates and day-by-day students. Summer institutes and workshops are available to musicians who wish to devote part of a summer to intensive training. Weekend institutes are held at various times all over the country



to bring outstanding musical leadership into the local situation. Guilds and associations of organists and choirmasters hold periodic meetings for purposes of fellowship, demonstrations, and the exchange of ideas. Everywhere it is evident that larger numbers of church musicians are enthusiastically interested in improving their musical and organizational methods.

It is also evident that this enthusiasm is reflected in the individual situation. In most sections of the country the length of rehearsals has been extended to insure more artistic handling of the service music. In only a few provincial areas is there a dogged insistence that forty-five minutes to an hour is sufficient time for choir rehearsal. A recent survey revealed that the average length of rehearsal was approximately one and one-half hours with some sessions scheduled regularly for two or more hours per week. Nor do these longer rehearsals drive singers away, for choir membership today is about twice what it was a generation back.

The insistence upon improvement of technique has encouraged the division of responsibility between console and podium. The organist is asked to exploit the possibilities of the instrument to a greater degree, and the choir director is expected to extract better choral tone from his singers. And is it so distressing that there should be this amount of specialization? A shared responsibility need not presuppose an authoritarian church music administration.

It has been my observation that there is an increasing respect of organists for the ability of directors and of directors for the musicianship of organists, and as soon as the church is willing to recognize tangibly the contributions of each in his own sphere, I am positive that there will be division of responsibility circumscribed by unity of spirit where such division seems advisable.

Yes, there is much evidence of improved church music technique in both the instrumental and vocal fields, but two questions must be considered in a careful evaluation: (1) Is our progress rapid enough in this business of improvement, and (2) Does improved technique breed problems of its own?

Now, regarding the first. Laziness is an unpleasant and uncomfortable word—so unpleasant and so uncomfortable that a person should apply it only to himself, his wife, or minister. Might I qualify it for use here by referring to the first person *plural*? Yes, we are all addicted to laziness—or at least we are unwilling to exert ourselves in concentrated action. We conduct unplanned rehearsals; we coddle



our singers; we neglect to follow through on problems of personnel; we seldom devote ourselves to intensive study of the music we must produce; we hurry through the service music; we substitute talk for work and fellowship for music. And the tragedy is that all these things happen not because we are lacking in knowledge but because we lack the inner drive which compels us to purposeful action. Musical standards will never be set by good intention, for Art, in all forms, represents achievement brought about by consistent and tireless battle against the barriers which separate us from the territory of the artistic.

We may improve our techniques, we may increase our knowledge, but until more church musicians become devoted to the doctrine of hard work, the music of the church will be, at best, second rate, and at worst, a thorough waste to time.

The second question raises perhaps even more alarming issues than the first, for unless technique is handmaiden to a depth of artistic perception rather than a god to be worshipped, we create an artistic Frankenstein monster which will one day turn on us. Commercialism has exploited technique to such an extent that the American public evaluates artistry in direct proportion to the technical facility displayed: The virtuoso has become a too important part of our national culture, and church musicians have been as guilty of playing to the gallery of public acclaim as have the performers of radio, television, movies, and the concert stage. These are the stop pullers, the pedal fanatics, the symphonic self expressionists, the rubato goldfish, the arm swingers, the fingers prestidigitators, the sentiment and emotion boys and the yell leaders. All these are persons who get a bug's-eye view of the musical art and think they have captured a vision.

Such fragmentation of knowledge and exploitation of special skills offers little hope for a deeply grounded Christian culture expressed through the musical art. The church needs musicians who are dedicated to the totality of Art and the complete message of the church.

These are the progresses and the problems as we move toward improvement of technique in the field of church music.

Another important trend is toward a more effective use of children's choirs. For many years the *Junior Choir* was a displayable parent-pleasing organization. The emphasis was on pageantry and juvenile charm rather than on continuity of worship. Tension developed between choirmasters and church school teachers over the distribution of the child's time, and organizations within the church

which should have been mutually helpful become bitterly antagonistic. The junior choir child was pulled in two directions through the competition of his leaders and the disparity of musical taste which existed between the opposing organizations.

Today, however, in many churches the director of the children's choirs works in close cooperation with the church school. She (or it might be he) devotes a substantial portion of her time in developing musical taste within the entire church school. Children's choirs still sing in regular worship services on special occasions, but their chief function is to intensify worship and develop appreciations in their own church school departments. I know of several churches which employ children's choir directors and charge their salaries to the Christian Education department. In another church a youth choir director devotes one Sunday each month to the improvement of music in the major divisions of the church school.

This is a significant trend and offers much hope for the future of the church. There is still a great need for coordination of the various departments in the teaching of hymns and liturgy. Look at what happens in a large percentage of our churches: A child enters the Beginners Department and is taught a few ditties which are scarcely sacred or musical. He moves to the Primary department and begins with a new body of literature. In the Junior and Junior High departments the process of musical relocation goes on with very little continuity from one level to another. Suddenly the High School person is thrust into the regular worship service and flounders because the hymns and the liturgy are strange to him. We have become so obsessed with the notion of adjusting education downward to the supposed level of the child that many young people go through a church school from the Beginners department to the High School department and have little to show for it other than a few colored stars for regular attendance. After all, who can estimate in grade points the child's aesthetic susceptibilities? My child may spend her life trying to grasp the meaning of the Lord's prayer, the beatitudes, and certain of the psalms; but I am positive that something within her responds to the beauty of them, and determined that she should have like the birthday spanking, "one to grow on."

When church schools prepare the young person aesthetically for church membership there will be fewer losses as the child becomes an adult in the life of the church. This, it seems to me, is one of the



chief purposes of a children's choir program coordinated with the church school.

There is also an unmistakable trend toward higher musical standards in the church. I know, it is still a frustrating experience going through piles of music in order to find one or two acceptable ones.

Yes, frustration is often the result as we try to salvage one piece from the musical trash barrel. One can still find the familiar strains of Schubert's Unfinished Symphony indecently welded to a meaningless and back-slapping ditty called "My God and I" or even bring the field of entertainment into the chancel. In one of our larger, and supposedly conservative metropolitan churches recently the choir combined with a nationally known night club singer to do a stirring performance of "I Believe." Yes, and organists still toy with impressionistic preludes and play interludes with vox humana mania. All this is true, but the original statement must still stand—we are moving toward higher standards. Publishers tell me that more sixteenth and seventeenth music is being sold than ever before; that anthems and organ pieces written around Gregorian and chorale melodies are asked for regularly; that organists and choirmasters becoming less fearful of the contemporary idiom; that more musicians are choosing selections according to the church year. This, of course, is in keeping with the trend toward liturgy and higher general standards within the separate denominations.

The attitude toward better music is gratifying, but there are attendant dangers. The chief danger is in a failure to recognize and react to the first trend we discussed—the improvement of techniques for the best music ever written could be played and sung every week, but unless it is underlined by excellence of communication we stand in the way of our own cause. Robert Shaw has said, "The only thing that stands between the public and good music is bad performance," and that is especially true in our churches. Congregations will listen to the trite and trivial, indifferently performed, and care not a whit, but if a bit of fine music is imperfectly handled, the blame is usually put on the composer and not the performer. We must be sure that the best music receives the best performance if we are to encourage the continued use of the World's truly fine music.

In spite of rapid progress toward better music in our churches there are still some obstacles which must be removed. One of these is the idea that a choir is a "come one, come all" organization. Churches will carefully screen all ministerial candidates and rebel at the phil-

osophy of selectivity in the music department of the church. At one time, after a period of auditions for choir singers and the rejection of a few aspirants, the choirmaster received a letter stating, "Sometimes a young, ambitious director, lacking the milk of human kindness, tries to use a church choir for self glorification." Then the correspondent concluded with the most significant statement of all—"Who cares if there are sour notes from the choir loft?" It is not necessary that we go to the extreme of professionalism in order to accomplish worth while music. In fact, the trend away from the paid choir is another indication of progress, but it is necessary for us to have some sort of standard from which to operate. Any person takes more pride in an organization for which he must qualify than in one which he simply joins. One of the great needs is for some degree of selectivity in every choir from the smallest to the largest.

Another unexplored area is the Music Committee. I know full well that many of you would prefer to leave it unexplored, and I understand, but our progress could be more rapid and more meaningful with the help which a sympathetic committee could give. Just this year a graduate student noted some very interesting information about music committees. From 125 churches these facts were tabulated:

In 97 churches the committee consisted of no more than three members

In 107 churches the committee met no more than twice a year

In 10 no meeting at all

In only 15 situations did the committee support the music program in a positive manner

In 73 churches no member of the choir was on the committee

In 61 churches the same chairman had served for three years or longer

(Eight reported same chairman for more than 10 years with one person having been chairman for 18 years)

There are many things a good music committee could do. First of all, the committee should be made up of not less than five nor more than nine members, and no member should serve more than three years without being away from it for a while. The membership should be made up of some choir members, at least one parent of a junior choir child, and members of the church of which one should also be on the finance committee. The job of the committee should be a positive one except when the unpleasant task of dismissing someone falls to it. These positive activities could be such things as assistance with re-



cruiting, raising money for special needs, arranging appropriate recognition for the music department, publicizing special music events, and any number of other helpful things. The time has come for us to move away from the conception of the music committee sitting in judgment on music and musicians and toward the idea of unity with the committee believing in and interpreting the music program of the church.

Choirmasters need not sit around and wait for that musical millennium; they could call meetings themselves to ask for assistance from the committee in certain areas. Of course, let's be good psychologists and not confront the committee immediately with insurmountable tasks but rather make it easy for the members to be of help. You see, if committees work with us, it is hard for them to work against us.

Still another real obstacle to progress toward musical standards is the matter of denominational attitudes. Few denominations or synods, conventions, conferences, or what you will within those denominations do very much to improve music. Most denominations within fixed geographical areas have annual meetings of some kind where ministers come together for business, assistance, and inspiration. Seminars are held on church finance, evangelism, community relations, Christian education, etc., but how often is a session devoted to the place of music within the church? It is an interesting fact that nearly all attempts at mutual cooperation in the business of church music have come from organists' guilds, choirmasters' associations and similar organizations and not from the church itself. Christian education specialists, architectural advisors, authorities on youth work, and advice on finance are all available to a church staff, but in very few situations is help available in the problem of church music. One of the most rewarding—yet disappointing experiences I have had was in conducting a church seminar for an annual meeting of a particular denomination. At the close of the session ministers crowded around with dozens of *real* questions. We retired to another room for more informal discussion. All the speakers were asked to make their remarks available for a publication which would go to all ministers in that area. The only difficulty was that the following year a similar session was crowded out of the program, and today nothing is happening to capitalize on the interest shown by the ministers themselves. It is almost like the parable of the Eagle and the Skylark:

### *The Eagle and the Skylark*

"A skylark and an eagle met on a rock upon a high hill. The sky-

lark said 'Good morrow to you, Sir.' And the eagle looked down upon him and said faintly 'Good morrow.'

"And the skylark said, 'I hope all things are well with you, Sir.'

"'Aye,' said the eagle, 'all is well with us. But do you not know that we are the king of birds, and that you shall not address us before we ourselves have spoken?'

"Said the skylark, 'Me thinks we are of the same family!'

"The eagle looked upon him with disdain and he said, 'Who ever has said that you and I are of the same family?'

"Then said the skylark, 'But I would remind you of this, I can fly even as high as you, and I can sing and give delight to the other creatures of this earth. And you give neither pleasure nor delight.'

"Then the eagle was angered, and he said, 'Pleasure and delight! You little presumptuous creature! With one thrust of my beak I could destroy you. You are but the size of my foot.'

"Then the skylark flew up and alighted upon the back of the eagle and began to pick at his feathers. The eagle was annoyed and he flew swift and high that he might rid himself of the little bird. But he failed to do so. At last he dropped back to that very rock upon the high hill, more fretted than ever, with the little creature still upon his back, and cursing the fate of the hour.

"Now at that moment a small turtle came by and laughed at the sight, and laughed so hard that she almost turned upon her back.

"And the eagle looked down upon the turtle and he said, "You slow creeping thing, ever one with the earth, what are you laughing at?'

"And the turtle said, 'Why I see that you are turned horse, and that you have a small bird riding you, but the small bird is the better bird.'

"And the eagle said to her, 'Go about your business. This is a family affair between my brother, the lark and myself.'

These "family affairs" could be avoided by greater mutuality on a level higher than the individuals involved.

As mentioned before, the standard of musical composition is higher today than it has been. However, we are still far from the same standard which operates for secular music. Name the 10 greatest contemporary composers. Now name the 10 greatest church composers. There is no real connection, is there? This condition should not exist. I once spoke to one of America's most talented composers, winner of a Guggenheim fellowship, the Prix de Rome and other honors. In answer to my question about composers and church music he



replied that no composer creates for his desk drawer and that the church is unwilling to perform that music which is to him honest and appropriate. It is still a dream of mine that some day a church or group of churches will commission an able composer to create a sacred work and will guarantee its performance. It could happen yet.

Now, having catalogued the various evidences of improvement in church music, let's return to a phase of our initial thesis that the current trend is toward a closer unity of religion and art. This presupposes a type of advance which should receive special attention. That is the movement toward the unity of the church and community culture. Caught in the pioneer American backwash of Calvinism, our churches for generations maintained a detached aloofness, sometimes merely tolerating community culture, and more often zealously damning certain of its manifestations for their tendencies toward entertainment. So, because the church with its Puritan sterilization of individual creative expression refused to embrace culture, it now must exert newly awakened energies toward reunion with it. In reality the church has never been separated from culture, but has, instead, substituted its own impotent culture for that of the secular world.

It is important to recognize that the church still is the axis of culture for more than half the adult population of the country. The schools provide cultural nourishment for youth, but the church is the only organized force for the improvement of mind, morals and taste which reaches any sizeable percentage of the adult population. The movies, radio and television are certainly strong influences, but the average person considers them media of entertainment and not of culture.

Modern technology has led us to expect that there is an easier way of doing things—even in personal religion. Genuine religion is something arrived at eventually by the person who earnestly seeks to grasp meanings and measure up to possibilities. Hard work at Christian pursuits is the best guarantee of vital religious belief—not the listless acceptance of oft repeated platitudes.

The Church can aid the individual by standing for those things of true greatness and causing those persons to aspire to that kind of greatness in their own lives. But how can one aspire to any sort of nobility when surrounded by the ignoble and inadequate. The kind of culture supported by the Church provides little incentive for the individual to rise to his full mental, emotional, and spiritual stature

but rather encourages him to carelessness and compromise with worthy ideals.

Is the Church somehow ignoring the fact that it needs to attract the best minds and the most expensive spirits? Is it not also important to minister to the needs of the sensitive, the educated, as well as to "the weak, the lowliest, and the lost?" The Church has for too long been the champion of mediocrity and the defender of questionable standards of culture. The power of the Christian Church would be multiplied many times if it had the devoted and active cooperation of those persons who have proved themselves leaders of men, apostles of learning, and followers after beauty.

A peculiar frame of mind is demonstrated within the walls of the Church in relation to standards of musical excellence. If a music department is able to demonstrate that it can produce a quality of music which will receive praise from outside the Church, then the Church itself begins to take pride in its music. BUT it must first be proved to those who have no active part in church life. Here is an example. A director of music wished to present choral-orchestral masterworks as a part of the Church music program, but he could get no financial support nor enthusiasm from the music committee and church membership. The choir, being thoroughly dedicated to the idea, secured enough financial support from friends to guarantee basic expenses. The night of the presentation found approximately 800 present in a church which seated 2,000. Of the 800, only about 300 were members of that church. This represented ten percent of the total membership. For the second major presentation, better than fifty percent of the 2,000 attenders were members of that church. Finally, the special choral-orchestral presentations were attracting capacity crowds of which seventy percent were members.

In another instance, a Bach Festival was almost ignored by the officials and members of the church until it was quite clear that music lovers were high in their praise for such a project. Now the church takes considerable pride in its Annual Bach Festival and demonstrates that pride tangibly by attendance and financial underwriting.

It should be clearly understood that the present picture of music in the Church is far more encouraging than that of a generation back. Perhaps this is indicative of better days to come. In one particular city of considerable size a marked improvement can be noted. Twenty five years ago most of the churches employed solo quartets instead of choirs. Only a few were able to attempt musical works of



any proportion. The works presented for the festival seasons run in the usual circles—Stainer, “Crucifixion”, Dubois, “Seven Last Words,” Menweldssohn, “Elijah”, and Handel, “Messiah”. Occasionally a new work of Victorian appeal was offered by one of the church choirs.

Today in that same area there are at least a dozen choirs of more than fifty members; there are scores beyond the thirty mark. On Palm Sunday this year there were more major presentations in the churches than during an entire year a generation ago. Many of these works were of high musical and performance standards, some with orchestral accompaniment. In one church the following works were presented during the Lenten season by their own and visiting choirs: Faure “Requiem,” Bach “Jesu, Meine Freude”, and “St. John Passion”, Mozart “Requiem” and fine organ literature.

In another city a church offered some of the world’s greatest music with a choir of 60-70 and a professional orchestra of 25-35. Each presentation cost from \$600 to \$900. During a four-year period the music department presented the Schubert “Mass in A Flat”, Mozart “Requiem” and “Mass in F”, Bach “Christmas Oratorio”, “Magnificat”, “Cantatas 4 and 64”, Beethoven “Mass in C Major”, Haydn “Seven Words”, Handel “Messiah”, and Brahms “Requiem”.

From a different part of the country comes the amazing story of a choir which prepares Sunday morning and Sunday evening music yet still presented in one year Bruckner “Mass in E Minor”, Britten “Ceremony of Carols”, Handel, “Messiah” (Christmas and Easter sections in separate performances), Schubert “Mass in G”, and at least four Bach cantatas.

It is apparent that it can be done—even with volunteer choirs and inadequate support—if there are even a few persons who believe in it strongly enough to do something about it. More persons—musicians, ministers, and laymen—need to share the dream that the Church can again assume a position of leadership in the musical field, persons who are not willing to give over the body of church music literature to the commercial interests. The big question is, Are enough people really and vitally devoted to the cause of better music in the Church to work tirelessly for higher standards?

Well, this is it. We could have spent our entire time in quoting and interpreting statistics. We could have subdivided the field of church music into tinnier plots, talking endlessly about lists of anthems or organ music, organizational procedures, hymn singing, choir membership, rehearsal techniques, intra-staff relationships, and so forth.

ad infinitum. But to what avail? Authentic progress will not occur in the improvement of the various aspects of our art unless that improvement is guided by a philosophy which makes out of practicalism, high reality. If our look is backward we have come far; if it is forward we have come but a few miles on a long journey.

How practical are you? How impractical do you dare be? Let us remember this: college degrees do not make educated men; A. G. O. certificates do not guarantee genuine musicianship; the training of the voice does not insure song; the development of convincing beat patterns does not give the world a conductor; theological knowledge and a facile tongue do not beget a meaningful ministry. The ultimate effectiveness of any bit of knowledge or skill can be measured only by its relatedness to a concept of being and of becoming. This idea does make it a "difficult world for practical people," but when we place ourselves in the line of inheritance of those who have dared to venture outside practical boundaries, we find meaning in the past and hope for the future.

---

"First, and at the very least, there would be a reminder to each of us that the cause of peace needs God. We would come to know also that responsibility for peace or conflict rests in some degree with each of us."

"Each would be heartened and strengthened by the certainty of close comradeships in faith and purpose. Thus, there would be set in motion a great and growing force that could unify men in peace as a common peril unifies them in war. There would be initiated unceasing and universal study of the principal factors in the global problems that seem to impede progress toward peace. There would be generated a support for honest and devoted world leaders that would inspire them to plumb new depths of knowledge and understanding, and seek new paths toward conciliation."

—From President Eisenhower's speech.



LITURGICAL ABUSES  
and  
THE PRESENT STATE OF CHURCH MUSIC IN THE UNITED  
STATES

by Edward B. Gammons  
Head of the Department of Music, Groton School  
Groton, Massachusetts

In speaking to you assembled church musicians, may I start with the premise that I am privileged to share with you some of the thoughts induced by many years of study in the field in which most of us gathered here are permitted to serve. Let me first say a few words to clarify our ideas of what we may mean by the term church music.

Walford Davies and Harvey Grace once hit upon a most happy phrase when they spoke of all "*Music applied to worship*," and in that definition it is distinguished from all other sorts of music. There is music which is inherently fitted to the purposes of corporate worship, judged by specific standards of character, aesthetic qualities, and technically distinguishing factors. This church music may be subdivided into one class known as "*music in aid of worship*," and a second, that employed as a "*vehicle of worship*."

The first category includes, of course, all instrumental and choral music performed by a few, rather than by the whole worshipping community. The second is what may be more specifically termed liturgical music, and it comprises hymns, chants, responses, and those parts shared by organist, clergy, choir and people, as something offered by all in prayer, praise and adoration.

Those of us responsible for music in aid of worship must be especially careful and sensitive to the solemn responsibility of our task. We must remember that though the worshipper in the pew at times has no active personal part to play in the things seen and heard, what he receives should dispose his heart and mind toward the deity he worships. Again, let me quote from Davies and Grace who tell us that music in aid of worship must be—*fittingly beautiful*, and that music as a vehicle of worship should be—*fittingly beautiful*, and that music is a real difference here, and one of which we should be keenly aware. Let me say in passing too, that this criterion is not restricted to music

alone, but applies as well to all the arts which we use to make the worship of God pure, real, and beautiful.

Up to this point I have repeatedly used the word worship, and while it may seem painfully familiar, we may well pause and consider what may be common to Jewish and Christian concepts.

Herbert has said, "Christian worship is the acknowledgment by the rational creature of the sovereignty of God." Further we must emphasize that for the individual the act of worship becomes an inspiration only when dutiful obedience is transformed into loving reverence and joyful wonder in the presence of him who is the source of all life and light. There one enters into the stage where—"reflecting as a mirror, the glory of God, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory."

In this way only can we realize the injunction of the Westminster Short Catechism, which says, "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever." I cannot do better to drive this thought home, than to quote from one of my first mentors in church music, the late canon Winfred Douglas. In his fine work, "Church Music in History and Practice," he says—Worship may be defined as the offering of all our faculties to the glory of God. - - Music moves and changes as man's whole being moves and changes, it lives parallel with his life, agonizes with his struggles, mourns with his grief, exults with his joy, prays with his adoration. - - Church music expresses the life of the Body of Christ, namely His Church and church music is therefore the earthly form of an eternal and primary activity of redeemed mankind."

Having thus related music to worship, and to man's place in this act, we may go on to a further assumption and that is this. Since all music used in worship is to glorify God and to edify, comfort and inspire our fellow man, it must be the best and purest offering we can give. We must worship God in the beauty of holiness, and worship him in spirit and in truth.

In this aspect worship music is a sacrifice or oblation in the highest sense. It comes from God, and as given back in his service it must be worthy of the attributes of him to whom it is offered. It means that whatever else it may be, this music must be the finest we can offer and it must be done as perfectly as lies within our power. It must be fitting and noble, and well done, and it may be of the simplest order or more complex if it remains fitting.



The effect of this medium must go beyond the mere pleasing and satisfying of the emotions immediately concerned; it must touch the heart and the intellect, and react upon the will so as to bring about a real spiritual effort and continuing action.

It is clear from this that the best church music we can use will be of greater worth and appropriateness in proportion to the degree which it stands apart from the average secular music associated with the profane life of the world. Much that is heard in church today can be described only as little short of blasphemous, and its sole purpose is often that of entertaining, diverting and relaxing the listeners, or glorifying the performers, thus destroying the attitude of true worship.

It is our task to examine ourselves and the music set forth, and then to cast away all that does not live up to the noblest and highest so that we may honestly exemplify the credo of the American Guild of Organists.

Now, let us examine briefly some of the opportunities here today for church musicians, what has been done, what is being done, and what means are at hand for achieving the best, and how sound criteria may be found and inculcated in the minds of all.

Let me say at once that if you do not own Dr. Leonard Ellinwood's "History of American Church Music," buy it at once and read it through with care, appendices as well. Within the confines of this one volume you will discover an outline and record of what has constituted the music in church on this continent from the pre-colonial days to the present, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific. It is a living book and you and I today are providing the material for forthcoming chapters. I am really serious about this, for as we choose what to do, and why we do it, we provide an index of the taste, practices and ideals of our day. For the good of all, we should write to Dr. Ellinwood, giving the service list of what we use with significant comments. Thus the record may be kept and those individuals who strive for the best may find others doing likewise, and thus a common bond of fellowship will unite the followers of an ideal.

Today there is much to be proud of in looking over the music in the life of American churches. I cannot confine my remarks to those of the Christian faith alone, for it has been my good fortune to hear some of the fine traditional modal Hebrew music in the Orthodox Jewish Synagogues, and there, where instrumental music is proscribed, many

cantors and singers lift their voices in music of the pro-christian dispensation.

The reformed and liberal synagogues too, have played a wonderful part and we find composers, organists and choirs producing music for that specific type of service, filled with rare devotion and loveliness.

The traditional music of the Roman Catholic Church rises about us on every hand, and not only reforms, but forward growth stretch forth in every part of the country. The magnificent heritage of plain-song, and related choral and organ material is being restored to the place of honor, and I should like to pay especial tribute to the work of the various teaching orders who are making liturgical music vital and natural to many thousands of young boys and girls. The work of the Gregorian Institute and the Pius Xth School in New York, as well as that of many other schools and conferences, and allied publishers and publications, is preparing the Roman Church for a wonderful resurgence of leadership in the liturgical arts.

Too many are woefully ignorant of the rich body of ecclesiastical song found in the Russia, Greek and Byzantine churches and others related to these. Here and there, in the large cities, even in small towns one finds the historic music of Athos, Ravenna, Gnamen, Kieff and such ancient centers. The colorful chant and the sonorous harmonic unaccompanied music of the Russian composers has much of enduring value and appeal for those who hear it, or will seek it out, and bring it to our services.

The child of the reforming Martin Luther, called the Lutheran Church after him, finds many adherents in this country today and we find countless cases where the works of the pre-baroque, baroque and later masters find employment. The chorales, motets, cantatas and passion-settings speak eloquently today as ever, and the names of Shultz, Praetorius, Buxtehude, Gumpeltzhaimer, Bach and others of like character are familiar names in church music once again. It is with joy and profound respect that one sees the work of men like Buszin, Hoelty-Nickel, Fleischer, and others today, and one cannot pass over this group without mentioning the excellent work of the Concordia Publishing house.

The Episcopal Church in the United States may be said to carry on from the ancient birthright of the Catholic faith, and it also bears the mark of the English reformation. One finds a wide range of



musical and liturgical practice within this body, many compromises and variations, but this church has furnished us with many fine composers and exponents of fine choral work, organ playing and research in liturgical arts.

Here again, while not allied to one single communion one should pay tribute to publishers like H. W. Gray, the Oxford Press, both houses with the name of Shirmer, The Boston Music Company, Charles Homeyer, Peters, Harold Flammer, The Fischers, Fitzsimons, Gamble and hosts of others who have brought out works on church music, organ music and practical performing editions of classic and contemporary choral music.

When one turns to the sometimes termed denominational or non-conformist churches one faces an array of groups which is hard to enumerate or even mention without the danger of slighting one or another. I shall not attempt to cite but very few examples which may apply to other groups as well.

The descendants of Calvin and Knox, in our Presbyterian churches have rendered noble and valiant service for the best in worship music. In the editing of fine hymnals and the founding of schools for church musicians this body has done much. The same might be said for the vast numbers of Methodist, Baptist and Congregational-Christian sects, and the Unitarians have provided us with noted hymn writers and men interested in a high quality of music. The special requirements of the Christian Science Faith draw attention to the solo repertoire and localized hymnody.

In the several more evangelical and fundamentalist bodies one finds a hearty and emotional, if perhaps less organized formal worship music.

It might be well here to speak of some of the types of choral groups found in the areas just mentioned. Today probably the most predominant form of choir is that of mixed voices. We have thousands of volunteer choirs of this type and I should pay tribute to those myriads of choristers who give their time and effort. I also might add a gentle word of criticism by saying that in some cases poor performance and slovenly organization is excused on the grounds that it is a volunteer group, or that non musical considerations outweigh the setting of any standard of competence. This is not entirely necessary or fair in my belief. I also would add a word of caution to those who depre-

cate the services of any paid musicians in the church. When sufficient and well trained volunteers can be found, well and good, but it is also true that every worker in the Lord's vineyard who does a noble work well, is worthy of his hire, and I merely would say that no stigma should be attached to those who make the ministry of music their true vocation.

We do have all sorts of graded choir systems where potential singers are encouraged to do their bit vocally—from the cradle to the grave and this is commendable. In other cases, alas too rare, we have the choir of tradition, that of men and boys. This often is a difficult musical medium to maintain, but in certain quarters it is nobly continued in parish churches and in cathedrals and schools. Where there can be proper support and training, this choir gives liturgical music a rendition peculiarly appropriate and beautiful. Witness those of Washington and San Francisco Cathedrals.

There are examples of the male chorus, notably in men's colleges or universities, and in a few churches. In the same category may be listed those choirs of women's voices, and be it said that in both cases music is found of a very high order.

The graded choir systems have been mentioned, but I should add that those multiple choirs do afford wonderful training for children of primary, elementary, junior and senior high school age, thus laying the ground for wide choral experience and a self perpetuating schola canterum.

Thus we see that in many sections there are choral units functioning from every age and ability, both professional and amateur, from the cherub choir to the oratorio society.

If I may now leave this sketchy noting of musical activity I should like to mention the manifestations of interest in church music as shown by the courses offered in schools, colleges, conservatories and seminaries, and the lively spate of short conferences dedicated to this work.

It is tremendously encouraging to see the vast number of summer schools and conferences where various faiths offer instruction in the basic matters of hymnody, chanting, choral repertoire and direction, as well as organ music and organ playing.

Beyond that we should take heart in the increased emphasis placed upon church music and liturgical arts in general in the leading semi-



naries and theological schools. We must face the fact that an informed and really interested clergy is absolutely essential for any real improvement in this problem of music in the church. It is not enough that the clergy should know the titles and numbers of the "dirty dozen" familiar hymns in the usual parish. The men of the cloth must know the history of the hymns and their appropriateness, but still more important they should be conversant with the standards of judging hymns and tunes from the standpoints of theological correctness, liturgical fitness, plain literary merit, reality, then melodic, harmonic and rhythmic character, and whether or not the range and sum of all features make it a worthy vehicle for worship.

Similarly, they must be able to recognize what is good in the use of the organ, and to discern between really noble and suitable material and that which is meritorious and out of place.

Most of us know the real debt we owe to choral leaders like Peter Lutkin, Canon Douglas, Healy Willan, Archibald Davison, Rowland Dunham, Everett Titcomb, The Christiansons and John Finley Williamson. One does not have to accept or agree with every precept of these men, but they did concern themselves with church music in a very real and practical manner. I cite them because through their labors we now see true schools of sacred music in places like Westminster Choir College, Boston University, the University of Colorado, Northwestern University and others.

The importance of musical education for the church owes a vast debt to Dr. and Mrs. Dickinson, and to Hugh Porter who head the Union Theological Seminary School of Music. In the same light we should be grateful to men such as Ray Brown, Walter Williams, Cochran Penick, Paul Calloway, Newell Robinson, Dr. Massey Shepherd and men in other seminaries and high places who have devoted themselves to the cause of putting church music on a high plane.

I have mentioned the number of summer schools, seminars and conferences, but just as important is the great revival of participation in choral music in our schools and colleges; and the many festivals show conclusively that young people today will respond wholeheartedly to the best. If you will pardon a personal note, I should like to speak of the sheer inspiration and encouragement I find each year, when my Groton School Glee Club joins with those of eight other boys' and girls' schools with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, under distinguished

conductors like Woodworth and Pelletier to present choral works of Schutz, Bach and Handel, Palestrina, Victoria, Brahms, and Faure, Thompson, Honegger and Holst.

When 350 young men and women join in a first class performance of these masterpieces, the ground is firmly laid not only for the appreciation of great music—but minds and souls which have been immersed in this sacred music will not tolerate poorer stuff in the worship services they may encounter.

So far we have listed the attributes of church music as used in worship and cited contemporary trends for good, and some less helpful music, so now I should like to turn to a few judgments on the use of the arts in worship.

We see churches springing up in every part of the land based on all known previous architectural styles, and many original concepts. Within these edifices we find organs of the normal variety and electronic sound producing media of many kinds. As a part of these buildings and also as distinct ornaments and decorative detail, we find our generation adopting every kind of accessory and external ritual aid and practice, often with little regard for the true history, meaning, import and ultimate effect.

Instead of citing these things and harshly labelling them as liturgical abuses I merely would state that the more traditional and hieratically organized and governed bodies have their close regulations and rubrics, whether lived up to fully or not and while we cannot legislate for non-conformist sects, it is possible that we may be able to agree on certain aesthetic principles, customs, and fitnesses, so that standards of of common worship procedure may prevent the abuse of materials and music.

This is not the place, perhaps, to embark upon a dissertation on architectural styles and the musical factors involved, but I do feel constrained to speak of some anomalous situations. We have seen the place of music in aid of worship, and a corollary to that would be that choirs and organs should be located for maximum musical effect and proper handling so that the message of the music sung, and the atmosphere created may reach the worshippers with the minimum of distraction by externals or interference.

By this token I dare say it would be far better if no choirs were placed directly facing the congregation, and while less objectionable it must also be said that the chancel seating arrangement is open to



question from many angles. The divided choir was never originally found in parish churches. It dates to a time when singing was largely unisonal and responsorial in monastic churches, and when cathedral choirs were divided they contemplated a complete well-trained choir on either side, and even so the matter of singing and directing remained a difficult one.

If one feels that the sense of unity may be strengthened by having the organ and singers at the front, a transept position may be possible, a location behind the altar or chancel focal point may be tried, but in most small churches the choir and organ fare far better when located in a rear gallery with ample room. Some liturgical churches have a small choir in the chancel for chanting and responses, and a larger choir for the singing of more complex music in the rear.

It must be said that for small churches, however, and those with a free order of worship, there is little sane reason for a divided choir or concert hall seating.

Today we find much attention devoted to reality, naturalness and even functionalism in architecture. There is a healthy movement toward more active congregational participation in the worship of most all faiths. This reality, the desire to be natural and true is laudable and fuller participation by all is a worthy ideal. The only objections possible are that at times unthinking applications of these ideas lead to incongruity and even ugliness and the negation of helpful aids to worship.

It might be well here to include the matter of vestments as worn and used in church. Again, the liturgical churches have established usages and styles, and I feel bound to point out that while imitation may be a sincere form of flattery, there should be a clear understanding of the meaning and use of vestments, and the use of ornaments and adjuncts to ceremonial should be thought out most carefully. True, one may not deny the right to use these things by any church or person, but there should be some reason and intelligence applied to ceremonial vestments and ecclesiastical ornament.

I might cite the case where one sees a choir marching around a church in procession merely for the sake of displaying the personnel and their new vestments, where by the way, in one such case I noted collegiate gowns and mortar boards worn, yet every chorister wore a full blown priestly stole, which being a regular ornament of the ordained clergy could hardly seem appropriate here.

One finds colored sanctuary limps, vigil lights and other time-

honored appurtenances used merely as empty decoration. This recalls to my mind an incident when I walked down the street of a metropolitan centre.

There, in a jeweler's window was a sumptuous display of crosses in precious and other metals. Above the glittering show was a sign with the legend, "The crosses are solely to beautify the wearer—they have no religious significance whatsoever."

For obvious reasons and to avoid misunderstanding I feel that we should be slow, in non liturgical churches, to use decorations, vestments and other externals unless we are fully aware of their history and implication.

No one enjoys the fine productions of the motion picture world more than I, and despite differences in taste, we all admit that the cinema has given us great dramatic presentations. However, all of us are so accustomed to seeing and hearing things via the medium of the theater, radio and television that we are open to a danger of assuming that this may be the norm for our worship services as well. It is possible that some may employ the means of the theater directly in the house of God, without carefully studying the true means and ends involved.

As far as the substance of the music goes we can not state specific melodic skips, easily defined harmonic progressions, common rhythmic devices, frequently heard choral and instrumental combinations are secular or sacred in themselves, but by powerful association and present usage that connotation influences us all. By the acceptance of primary principles of true worship and good church music we are bound to keep from the sanctuary those effects which readily carry our thoughts to the theater, concert hall, nightclub, ballroom or parade ground.

That is why I dare assert that there are specific styles in musical composition which are distinctly out of place in worship, and it is our plain duty to keep our art untainted by such things, however pleasant and good they may appear in normal everyday life.

It may seem as commonplace to you, but it seems to many that we are afraid of a moment of silence in our services. The organ must provide some sort of background to cover every otherwise unoccupied moment in the service.

The direct attention to the spoken word of the minister in prayer or meditation is vitiated for many when the organist attempts to provide soft "Hollywood" mood music on aethereal sounding celestes and



percussions. You may take issue with me on this, but permit me to quote excerpts from a little paper by Sir Sydney Nicholson, formerly of Westminster Abbey.

“There is a tendency apparent in most churches to fill up every corner of the service with some sort of sound: not only must we have a voluntary while the choir comes in—it must last precisely until they have arisen from their knees; a few bars must be added at the end of the psalms if the minister has not yet reached the lectern—he could not possibly walk there without an instrumental accompaniment: even if the final words of peace do not seem to enjoin as much as ten seconds of silence, and if we have not to endure the sentimental trivialities of a ‘vesper hymn’, we must be thankful to escape with a few more or less innocuous chords on the *Voix Celestes*, even though the harmonies may be incorrect and the progressions inconsequent. If only those in authority would realize the value of some occasional silence in our services how great the gain would be. The continual use of music to fill up all the vacant spaces give a sense of restlessness and lack of deliberation that is sometimes painful. It tends to make the whole thing seem artificial, and a performance rather than an act of worship.”

Personally, I have been very moved by recent demonstrations of choric speaking, and conversely I admire certain examples of choral sound without an associated text, but I think we should be hesitant to use humming or similar wordless choral effects, because this inevitably savors of the concert hall, and we should ponder well the dictum that the words are the essence in sung worship material.

Allied to that is a commonplace today, which is the use of sung responses and amens to spoken vesicles, prayers and benedictions. For the free churches no doubt effective and legitimate arrangements may be made, but I deem it necessary to say that in many ostensibly liturgical services the choir is encouraged to indulge in all sorts of theatrical and indefensible choral flights which violate all liturgical, musical and common sense, being used solely to “prettify” the service.

If we rationalize on the matter we are led to say that when a versicle, prayer, or benediction is uttered in the normal speaking voice, the response should be made in like medium. When the first is sung, let us sing in reply, and let not the choir usurp the proper place of the people where the answers supposedly are made by all the congregation.

Most of us, as organists, delight to use our instrument to the fullest, and to show how well we have mastered the control of the mechanics and tone of man’s grandest musical medium. Then too, we have, or

should have practiced diligently to interpret the wide literature, and we long to play as many examples as we can, of what looks prepossessing on the program. This should not blind us to the fact that our primary objective as church organists is to play the church service and to make it as helpful and meaningful as possible for every person present. This means that we should devote as much care and preparation to the accompaniment of hymns, chants and anthems as to the most complex organ solo.

Then too, we should remember that much organ music, however great as music, may be unsuited to the atmosphere of the service. Some items are for better reserved for recital use. This emphatically does not mean that the organ in service should be dull or colorless, but people should feel the closeness of God's presence rather than admire the technical prowess of the virtuoso.

Organists who are deeply concerned with the tonal design of the instrument should also bear this in mind. We should study closely the needs of a given church in regard to the use of the organ in support of choir and congregation and for the creation of organ ensemble and color balance suited to the acoustical environment and the demands of the liturgy. We need not forsake principle or ignore the fact that in the future the taste level may be on a higher plane.

The organ need not be designed to meet the demands of the unskilled player, nor should it be conceived to meet the predilections of but one particular school of playing. I state these obvious facts because it is my impression that many organs built today do not seem to bear any relation, tonally or structurally to the needs of worship, the acoustics of the edifice, or the requirements of the ordinarily competent organist.

I have no desire to antagonize or affront those who admire, play or build electronic instruments, and I know that in some cases they may provide players and listeners alike with that which they feel they enjoy, or deem suitable to their purpose. Yet, I can not forbear from asserting that we can not escape from the fact that we live in an age when much of all that we hear proceeds from a loud speaker, and as I said before, we are a radio and television conditioned people. At the risk of being called stupid, and a reactionary of the blindest sort, I am bold enough to question whether the present electronic sound media are conducive to worship at its best. I only hope that musicians, scientists, architects, clergymen and people in general may pause and consider normal direct musical tones, so that we may not become a



people devoid of natural discriminatory aural faculties.

Financial considerations and spatial requirements must be met, but I dare to voice my fear that electronic organs and bells, as now produced, are destroying some of the finer qualities of the ancient musical art, and that much of what I term the human, personal and distinctive musical qualities are endangered. It may well be that science shall find a way to counteract what I feel are the present deficiencies of sound production, amplification and dissemination by electronic means, but though I may be a lone wolf howling in the wilderness, I must state personally I do not believe that tones so produced and sent forth do blend with voices, nor provide a suitable musical medium so essential to the best church music.

In traversing these many areas I have tried to give a picture of the state of things as I see it through our musical magazines like "Diapason," "The American Organist" and the Church music periodicals, plus the perusal of countless service lists and articles in church papers and daily ones from major cities. I have essayed to examine the marked opportunities and diverse expressions open to those who feel the urge to worship and lead others in that way. I have touched upon many matters in which there is room for modification or perhaps violent disagreement. It is my thought that if we approach these subjects with mutual respect and understanding we may be enabled to better serve our respective churches.

We regard one another with genuine religious toleration and we recognize that within limits the needs of people vary according to circumstances, still we may unite in holding fundamental musical, aesthetic and liturgical principles, which when practiced will enrichen, deepen and render more perfect our common worship of the source of all beauty, perfection, peace, and joy.

---

### REVIEWING THE NEWS

At least three Zion ministers will spend Christmas for the first time in recently purchased new homes. Rev. D. H. Thomas of Walters, Chicago, (purchase price unknown). Rev. Charles Foggie, Wesley Center, Pittsburgh, (built at a cost of \$30,000), and the Rev. J. D. Cauthen, Metropolitan, Norfolk, (built at a cost of \$23,000), all are spacious homes designed for the type of living the ministry has a right to expect.

## YOUTH CHOIRS IN THE CHURCH OF TODAY

By Paul O. Manz, M. Mus.

Director of Christian Education and Music, Mount Olive Evangelical  
Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minn.

Used by permission of the American Guild of Organists.

*Need and Purpose*

At the turn of the century, American churches found themselves in a peculiar position both spiritually and musically. The emphasis had been solely placed with little or nothing done for the youth of the congregation. Every clergyman appreciates the fact that we cannot have a flourishing congregation tomorrow if we do not first take care of the youth today. If, therefore, it is true that we cannot have secondary education without the prerequisite of elementary education, and if it is true that we can't have colleges or universities without our present high schools, then it must follow that in order to have a well informed and intelligent congregation tomorrow, we must make adequate provision for and train the youth of today. This must be done in addition to working with adults. Look at the vast number of new churches and parish houses springing up throughout the length and breadth of our nation. The emphasis is on the functional, practical, and educational. Congregations are beginning to realize that they must offer a real spiritual program and challenge for its youth in order to insure and train it for the future. The church that does not reach or does not attempt to reach its youth has built its foundation on sand and faces self-destruction. The recent trend towards a well-rounded educational program for the church is a sharp departure from the well established path of a few decades ago.

Around the year 1900, we found any number of churches paying well for a so called professional "Quartet Choir." Here in St. Paul in the year 1904 the salary of the soprano in one of the leading Protestant churches was \$1200 a year as compared with \$800 for the baritone-director! This quartette came into being because many churches wanting good music, could not or did not think of ways to attract, train and discipline young people serving the church. The reason was obvious. Youth never really became a part of the church or its service. It was always a service for adults. It is true there were some youth choirs at this time but they seem to have been heard in the evening services and because of the lack of incentive, enjoyed a rather hasty and com-



plete demise. Yesterday's youth is no different from today's since adults as well as young people like to have the feeling of "belonging." They want to be accepted as equals and given the opportunity, can and will come through with better than acceptable performance.

According to Dr. Leonard Ellinwood in his new book, *THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN CHURCH MUSIC*, there was another reason for the "quartette choir."

As long as our churches laid the emphasis on the social gospel, with its liberal, almost secular focus, there was no true incentive for a less personal form of music than that offered by the quartet choir. Young people's need for fellowship found adequate expression in the musical side of the Sunday School and in occasional young peoples choirs for the less formal evening services. It remained for the liturgical movement of recent decades to demonstrate in a convincing manner how little true worship there could be in the singing of a quartet.

With then a renewed interest in the spirit of liturgy and worship and an appreciation for the youth of the parish, the quartet choir gradually vanished from the scene and in its wake came the adult choir and somewhat later the multiple choir dedicated to the glory of God for people of all ages. It has its roots in the children and culminates with the adults. Parents and children alike can worship together in their respective choirs and aid the congregation in its worship.

To those critics of the multiple choir system who say that the musical results of youth choirs are often ragged, harsh, faltering and disappointing, may I say first of all that any choir is only as good as the training and discipline it receives. However, an understanding and resourceful conductor can do much to train the youth on the proper mechanics of voice culture, sight reading, etc. Secondly, I should like to suggest that while we play our music and sing our anthems in church for people gathered there, we must recognize that these contributions are *really musically offerings* to God. We should teach our people to please Him first and not necessarily the man in the pew. This I believe is in conformity with our Guild motto, "Soli Deo Gloria."

Finally in appraising the musical results of youth choirs, may I remind us all of our first attempt at playing a church service. We weren't as old and as experienced then as we are now. Should someone have deprived us that first experience we might never have become organists. Instead, I might be addressing a convention of music critics or salesmen for the player organ! Of all the many factors involved in

our growth and progress, we still respect and depend on experience for untold help. Let's not be guilty of depriving our youth of a rich experience in church work. The church of tomorrow will be richer and stronger because of our foresight and devotion today.

Perhaps at this time it might be in order to list some of the various advantages and purposes of the youth choir. Some have already been touched upon.

### 1. Technique of Worship

First, through the youth choirs we are able to teach young people the simple technique of worship. It must be taught to be appreciated and young people are, as a rule, most appreciative. It was David who said, "I was glad when they said unto me let us go into the house of the Lord." The technique of worship is especially important during those times when the choir is visible to the congregation such as processional and recessionals. The technique of worship is a real challenge to the choir director if his choir is in the chancel, whether it be adult or youth. A few years ago, a cartoon appeared in the New Yorker, showing an organist giving his choir boys a fresh supply of comic books to "keep them occupied" during the sermon!!! Obviously it was an attempt to maintain outward decorum and those of us with similar problems will appreciate the situation! The church service must always inspire and lead man to worship—it dare never distract or be guilty of exhibitionism!

### 2. Musical Heritage

Secondly, the great musical heritage of the church includes the great hymns, chorales, liturgy and wealth of instrumental and vocal music inspired by the church and written for it ought to be a part of every church goer's and most especially of every choir member's education. If we begin early enough in training young people to appreciate these elements, our task will be considerably lightened when these youngsters finally reach the adult level. Train a child when he is young and when he is in your adult choir, he will not be prejudiced or depart from it but come to you with an open mind, a willingness to serve the church through music, and gratefulness for the education thus far received.

### 3. Vocal Technique

A third point to consider is that youth choirs *can* be taught vocal technique. In fact it is easier to teach youngsters than to teach some adults who have preconceived notions about everything you want to do or adults who really like to sing in the choir but have never been



taught from an early age. Note-reading, sight-seeing, breathing, tone-production, vowels, consonants, and above all INTONATION is quite a simple matter with interested young people. We surely don't proposed to give such a child a vocal lesson during the rehearsal period, but we do want them to go away feeling that they have learned something about *how* to sing. Our Carol Choir sings unaccompanied anthems from time to time and, therefore, great emphasis is placed on blend and intonation. A cappella singing tends to true pitch and lessens the disadvantages of instrument equal temperament. It is always gratifying to note the personal interest these young people show in perfection. They are perhaps overly critical of themselves.

Since Church Music deals with the very truths of Christianity itself, youth choirs are really an extension of the church's educational set-up. Music thoughtfully selected, therefore, serves as a vehicle to impress upon the open mind (so characteristic of a child) the Bible texts and truths. This knowledge will be of particular value to the children in days to come, will serve to comfort and inspire in times of need, and will bring them together to work and share in a religious experience and fellowship.

#### 4. Musical Offerings

Finally, with a multiple choir system, it is possible to have a musical offering at most if not all of the services of the church. On special occasion, such as Christmas, Easter Day and other high Festival days, it might be desirable to combine all the musical forces of the church in one special anthem emphasizing the particular theme for the day.

These are but a few of the many advantages and purposes of a youth choir program. We need not have an elaborate program involving hundreds of people in the choir loft. Neither ought we restrict ourselves to one level only, namely adults. If the emphasis is solely on size, the choir can become unwieldy and sensational. If we emphasize the adult level only it can be very limiting and confining, can prove to be wholly inadequate, monotonous and perhaps in time even frustrating!

A multiple choir in your church loft means work, but I am sure you will agree that the youth deserve it. We need them and they need us; together the church benefits. The more we work together the more we glow with enthusiasm and this enthusiasm spreads to our co-workers.

#### *History*

According to the most reliable information the first multiple choir

director was Dr. Augustine H. Smith of the First Congregational Church in Chicago way back in 1901. He lead five choirs beginning with the Carol Choir of 50 girls (ages 8-12), a Boys Choir of 35 unchanged voices (ages 8 until the voice changed), a Cecilian Choir of 35 girls (ages 12-16), a Treble Clef Choir of 40 women, (age 15-20), and a choral Union of 50 mixed voices. This group met every week and sang the morning, evening and mid-week services plus all of the standard oratorios. Other churches recognizing the value of just such a plan, have made similar patterns to suit their own individual needs.

As you can well appreciate, music for just such a combination of choirs was scarce at first. Composers and arrangers had to be enticed to contribute materials for these choral combinations. What was even more difficult at first, publishers were reluctant to take the initiative and make these materials available to the general public.

In 1945, I heard a paper delivered at Northwestern University by Kenneth E. Runkel on the subject, THE MULTIPLE CHORUS AND THEIR MUSIC. He paid particular tribute to Edward A. Fuhrman of Johnstown, Pennsylvania, for inducing both publisher and composer to collaborate in supplying music especially written for this combination of choirs.

Today, we find a tremendous amount of material available for every type of choral organization. Most of it is excellent, some of it borders on the questionable side and a very small percentage of it is definitely poor. However, the point I wish to make is that there is no longer the excuse that "I can't find the materials for my youth choirs." All we need do is *seek* and *sort* and we shall *find*! The multiple choir plan, I am sure, is here to stay until something better comes along. Until that time I trust we here will exploit its possibilities to the fullest advantage for the benefit of the church and its musical and spiritual program.

In a recent study involving 80 choral conductors of the Twin Cities, a section was devoted to the materials used of youth choirs. The materials used were indeed most varied. Some were poor but by far the majority of them were excellent. A compilation of these anthems for youth choirs and anthems for the combined multiple choirs was included in the Work Book prepared by Dr. Donald M. Ferguson for the A. G. O. Convention in the Twin Cities.

### *Organization*

In organizing a multiple choir plan, considerable thought will

have to be given to the needs and resources of the parish. If, for instance, you have only one service per Sunday, a multiple choir plan will be somewhat difficult to arrange for and will seem rather needless. A Church with a number of services a week has a great need for an extended musical program involving the use of many choirs.

Perhaps the most practical age to begin choir work is 9 although creditable work has been demonstrated on a lower level. So called Cherub Choirs (age 6-8) are being trained and used with excellent results. Since the basic problem with this age level is reading ability, both music and words must be taught largely by rote. It can, however, serve as a feeder to an older group, thus justifying its existence. Materials for this age group are as yet somewhat limited; recently, however, some suitable and singable hymns, carols and chorales for unison singing have been published. From age 9 through 12 it is possible to combine both boys and girls in various choral combinations. Children at this age get along quite well together so that no real problem accrues in combining them. In the large parish an additional group of unchanged boys' voices may be gathered as well as a separate group for the girls. For developing strong lay workers in the Church, a boy choir, if successful, is of great value. During the junior high school age, experience shows that the two sexes are not attached to each other and so choirs including these boys and girls are not always successful. For this reason it is better to separate. The social consciousness of adolescence must be taken into consideration. During senior high school the picture changes and we find that boys and girls not only attract each other socially but musically as well. There are any number of first rate high school choirs which will bear out this fact.

In planning a multiple choir program in your parish, you ought to list the various choirs available to the church. The choir director will be greatly aided in his work if he can enlist the aid and support of many other people. The pastor, the superintendent of the Sunday School, the music committee, the deacons, the various guilds of the church, the Men's organizations, etc., etc., all can be most helpful in bringing information and enthusiasm home to the youth. It isn't enough to just make an announcement in the church paper or the Sunday School telling of the opening choir rehearsal; we must make personal contact with young people and enlist their support. Enlist a few to go with you and talk to others. Don't beg for singers but make it attractive enough to them so that they will *want* to come! Posters, bulletins, short informative talks setting forth the aims of the music



program of the church can do much to promote and generate youth's participation in your musical program.

A system of records must be kept listing the name, address, telephone number, parents' name, and name of choir for each person. At the first rehearsal, gowns ought to be fitted and assigned. The first rehearsal is all important as it will leave an indelible impression on the minds of all, especially the younger set. Begin promptly and wait for no one. We open our rehearsals with a very short prayer, or a prayer hymn. The spoken prayer is very often given by one of the members. In the senior choir, short devotions are led by the members themselves. Rehearsals for youth choirs ought not to exceed one hour in length.

We spend a few minutes warming up in various ways and then plunge into the work at hand. It might be well to insist that no other meeting be held in the close proximity of your rehearsal room during any rehearsal. We don't want any unnecessary competition from the Dorcas Circle or the Cub Scouts in another part of the room. You ought to be free from all outside disturbances when you rehearse. Be insistent on order and accept nothing less than perfect attention.

Occasionally you will find a child who because he is timid or inexperienced makes many errors. Correct all errors cheerfully, never causing a scene or making someone's ignorance become public knowledge. We encourage humor particularly when there has been great tension in learning some passage that has been especially difficult. It tends to relieve tensions with better work resulting and acts as a good safety valve!

In every choir we try to appoint a few older and experienced people who will assist with detail work. While I conduct the rehearsal someone will quietly take the roll call and check by telephone any absence. Agree ahead of time with the choir as to what constitutes a reasonable number of absences and then stick to the agreement. Assistants also check on Sunday morning to see that all distracting hair ribbons are removed, and extraneous accoutrements eliminated. Others will check to see that the choirs are properly lined up for processions and recessionals. Librarians distribute the music ahead of time, put all materials away and properly catalog and take inventory of all gowns and music. In order to enlist outside help you might organize a Mother's Club whose sole purpose it is to see to it that the choirs' every needs are fulfilled and assisted in every way possible.

The rehearsal room has the appearance of the choir loft and people sit for practice in the same manner as they do on Sunday morning. A

word or two ought to be said about the instrument used to accompany the choir rehearsals. All too often, this piano is used by the organist, by the many church organizations, by the choir accompanists and the many adolescents who just love to bang on something. Your piano need not be a Steinway but it ought to be in good repair and in tune. You cannot expect to teach your youngsters intonation if the instrument is out of tune. If a number of pianos are available, choose the better one for choir purposes only and insist that it be kept in tune.

Business meetings ought to be kept at a bare minimum. The primary choir business is and ought to remain that of singing. We feel the less you emphasize organization, the stronger and better the quality of work produced will be. We must not become too bogged down with matters not directly related to the business of singing.

Since ours is a liturgical service, I try to plan my music as far in advance as possible. Regular consultation with the pastor on the matter of anthems, hymns, liturgy, etc., are held in order to tie up with the sermon topics where possible and to present a cohesively planned service. Anthems are posted in the choir room in advance so that everyone will have an opportunity to see what is coming next.

While it is true that the adult choir takes the bulk of the work in our late service, some of the other choirs are occasionally brought in in order to provide a varied musical diet for the congregation. This also had the added attraction of being an incentive to the youngsters who certainly enjoy taking over the work of their elders. Their ultimate aim is, of course, to some day sing in the adult choir and when they can substitute, they go all out to the best of their ability.

There has been much discussion in many quarters as to whether or not a person ought to be permitted to join a choir if his is the offpitch or colorless voice. I do not know what your policy is on this matter but we have yet to refuse membership to any young person. Anyone who wants to sing in the youth choirs is permitted to do so. There are many ways in which even the most colorless or off-pitch voice can be absorbed by a large group. Our Carol Choir draws about 90% of its membership from the people in the youth choirs. Since it sings unaccompanied material the choice of voices is careful, deliberate and uncompromising. The reason is obvious.

Every voice in our choirs is auditioned. This is done either formally or informally. Any new voice receives a formal audition. People who come back year after year are auditioned for their ability to blend with others. They do not receive a formal audition unless

I suspect they have slipped or their voices have changed.

While it is true that I have never refused membership to any young person who really wanted to sing, I have held certain adults back in the best interests of the choir. After repeated auditions, and after being convinced that the individual could not contribute to the group in a positive way, the answer has been a polite but firm "No!" This policy has the backing of the choirs, the music committee, and the staff itself.

Because of this policy, people *in* the choir appreciate their position more and a waiting list has been formed.

Finally, may I suggest that you surround yourself with as many zealous and interested people in youth choirs as it is humanly possible to do. They will make excellent liaison officers between the congregation and the young people on one side and you and your music on the other. If you must make all the approaches to the other by yourself, the task is difficult and formidable; if you have assistants whom you yourself have trained, the job is much easier and more successful.

### *Facts And Future*

In a recent study conducted in the Twin Cities, questions pertaining to the musical policies of their church was asked of some 80 directors of music. These churches were chosen because of their importance to the community, their geographical location and the quality of their work. Most faiths were included in this survey. Since only 63 forms were returned, it is a bit difficult to make a clear cut summary of findings. However, there are some very interesting indications. Of the 63 parishes responding, 7 had no choir at all, 13 had an adult choir only and only 43 had some other choir in addition to the adult choir. Of the 43 however, there were only six which had a graded system of choirs along the lines we have outlined. Most of the parishes in addition to the adult choir, fostered a children's choir all the way from age 8-11. None of the parishes, with the exception of one, had a professional choir made up of paid singers. Only 6 had a part professional group where a few singers were paid a regular salary. Forty-three congregations listed a multiple choir plan, but as was mentioned before, only 6 really fulfilled this hope.

Another interesting development was the beginning age of the adult choir. In churches where there were more than one choir, the average beginning age of the adult was from 19 years on and up. In parishes where there was only an adult choir, or at the most an adult



and Sunday School Choir, the beginning age was from as early as 15 years on and up to 18.

In all instances, the adult choir sang every Sunday. In many places, the youth choirs appeared every Sunday also. Some youth choirs appeared only 12 times a year; some only at the great festivals of the church year such as Christmas and Easter Day! One of the churches rehearsed its youth choir 3 times a year in preparation for one of the church festivals!

As was pointed out a moment ago, this survey was conducted only at the local level. How this applies to the national scene I can only guess. It ought to be mentioned that we here in the Twin Cities are fortunate to be the possessors of much good music. With our Minneapolis Symphony, the University of Minnesota and the many excellent music schools, colleges and high schools in and around this area presenting so much excellent music, the influence of these sources of culture cannot be minimized. Other communities are not so fortunate, I am sure. Many of our churches have set high standards for themselves and for others. However, much remains to be done.

Somehow, we must put across the idea in as forceful a manner as we know that the youth of today must be included in all of our plans for tomorrow. There is no excuse for eliminating or for forgetting them. They ought to be included in all we do. We can, of course, always hire adult professionals to sing for our service but then where has our stewardship of time and talents gone? Those of us who are organists and choir directors must take the initiative and train the youth. The clergy are busy and many of the laity are uninformed on matters pertaining to church music.

I congratulate those of you who have youth choirs in your parish, and wish you continued success in your endeavors. I trust this essay has not been a repetition of what you already know. Somehow, I hope you have been re-dedicated to the youth choir and also the adult choir. To those of you who have no youth choir program, I trust you will consider and weigh what has been presented this afternoon with an open mind. Plan your approaches carefully and see for yourself how really complete and satisfying it is to have a youth choir program along with your present adult choir. I am convinced that in time your adult choir will be stronger for it. In the meantime you will have the satisfaction of introducing many more people to the rich musical heritage of the church, the reward of friendship of the children and the gratitude of parents.

Soli Deo Gloria!

## A CHILDREN'S CHOIR THAT'S MORE THAN ORNAMENTAL\*

The multiplication of the children's choirs is one of the hopeful developments in church life, but too often their function is wholly supplemental. They are paraded in special occasions, or sing a song one Sunday a month—and then are not seen until next time. This is good as far as it goes but it keeps the children on the periphery of the worship of the church.

The children's and adult choirs have been completely integrated at the Community Church at the Circle of Mount Vernon, New York, under the leadership of Ralph L. Grosvenor, organist and director of music. During the school year boys and girls from the third grade through junior high join with the adult choir in the singing of the anthem. They participate in the processional hymn, the choral call to worship, and the response after the Lord's Prayer. At baptisms the children sing a mixed choral arrangement of the Brahms "Lullaby." When cantatas or portions of oratorios are given the children sing all of the choruses with the adult choir, and many times carry solo passages for tenor or soprano.

The active membership of the combined choirs run to around 70, with the youngsters slightly outnumbering the adults. No one is paid to sing, but all give lovingly and enthusiastically of time and talent.

As a member of the congregation we feel cheated on those rare occasions when the children do not share in the anthem. Their bright faces are missed, but the loss is musical as well as scenic. We asked the director for a musical explanation of our experience.

"The children's voices are to the choir what the octave couplers or four-foot pipes are to the pipe organ. They add a bright sparkling tonal color and give lift. The adult mixed voices may be considered as a foundation tone, while the boys' voices, with their soft quality, are like flutes. The girls' voices are quite different, and seem more like string or reed pipes. Thought of in this way, they can give a rich organ effect."

"Does the participation of the children make any difference in your choice of music?"

"I do not make a limit approach to children's voices. They seem able to yell in high soprano on the playground without suffering any vocal damage. With vocal instruction they can attempt a substantial program. The whole aim of our music is devotional and educational rather than display. We do not go in for vocal calisthenics. Trills

are not for us. But we do sing Mozart, Beethoven, Handel, and any similar works which are within our vocal capacity. We do not attempt the impossible."

"How do you rehearse?"

"It is not convenient to rehearse the two choirs together. I have the children for a theoretical hour and a half Thursday afternoon, but the net time is not much over an hour, although I do some additional work with individual children. I have the adult choir for a full hour and a half. As we have no place for a 'warm up' on Sunday morning, we can have only a brief assembly before the service."

"How can you accomplish so much in so little time?"

"We understand what we are doing in relating three elements to each other: the nature of the music, the organ, and the training of voices. We plan ahead. Anthems are usually in rehearsal for three to six weeks before they are sung, and special programs for an even longer time. This gives the singers time to become thoroughly familiar with the music and to digest it.

"We have folders for all members—with their names on them. Before each rehearsal the music on which we will work is placed in them in proper order. With the children, the choir mother and her assistants take care of everything except the actual singing. They check up on applications, meet with parents, explain the rules, and take the attendance. They keep both the gowns and the children in order. This relieves me of a heavy load."

"What is your practice in repeating anthems?"

"When we work up something new we usually sing it twice during the year. Only in emergencies do we fall back on what might be called standard numbers. The choir likes to feel that it is ploughing new ground and extending its knowledge and experience every week. Repetition dulls their interest, so we hold it to a minimum."

\*Reprinted with permission from *Protestant Church Administration and Equipment* Summer, 1954.

---

On the occasion of the Deering Meadow convocation at which President Eisenhower spoke the Archbishop of Canterbury welcomed the President on behalf of the World Council. Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam pronounced the invocation and Bishop Eivind Berggrav of Norway gave the benediction.



## OF HISTORICAL NOTE

Material courtesy of Miss Willie M. Stone, Montgomery, Ala.

From Souvenir, Twenty-first Quadrennial Session, compiled by

Rev. W. H. Snowden, 1900

About the year 1832 the colored members of the M. E. Church Ebenezer, cor. Fourth and D. Streets, S. E. became very much dissatisfied in consequence of being discriminated against by their pastor who was a white man.

They determined to separate and go to themselves where they could worship under their own vine and fig tree. They first began to hold services in a school house, thence to the residence of the late Mrs. Henrietta Bowen. After worshipping there for several months their number had so largely increased that it became necessary to provide more ample accommodations.

The official and leading members held a council and there they decided to erect a more suitable frame building, 30 x 40 ft. on the rear of the lot on which the present edifice now stands. It cost about \$1,800 and was formally dedicated in 1833. Rev. George Galbraith preached the dedicatory sermon; in the same year Rev. Abraham Coles was appointed as its first pastor.

The membership grew rapidly because the people had a will to work and about 1839 the church was admitted into the Wesley connection.

I haven't the regular order of service of the following ministers, owing to the fact that in ante-bellum days, church records were not extensively kept; but Rev. Leonard Collins, Rev. George Galbraith, Rev. S. T. Gray and Rev. J. B. Cox carried the work forward for the next 12 years meeting with success.

About 1845 the membership and congregation had nearly outgrown their small frame church, and these anxious people decided to build a larger house. After consultation the project was carried to build on the front of the same lot of ground, which they did during the pastorate of Rev. Turpin.

Those following in close succession were Reverends Jas. A. Jones, S. M. Giles, Jos. J. Clinton, Singleton Jones and Father Jno. D. Brooks;

they all rendered a noble part in spiritual work, and in four years the sum of \$4,000 was raised during these dark days, when all the members were poor and many were slaves, and had to be in their homes by 10 P. M.

Then came Rev. Jno. Tappan, J. P. Hamer, J. B. Trusty and Rev. Jos. Armstrong; they carried on the spiritual work begun by their predecessors.

Reverends J. F. Lyons, S. S. Wales, R. J. Daniels and Z. T. Pear-sall came in order named and performed their duties faithfully.

Up to this time the people had become lukewarm, many were scattered to other cities and even other churches had been started from this. During all the changes that are wrought by time and environments the brick structure was nearly in a state of decay.

In 1887 Rev. Robert H. G. Dyson, the young man's friend, the great organizer and the prince of church builders, came to us and in 1889 the present imposing edifice, with its magnificent spire containing the first bell used in a colored church in the City of Washington, was dedicated. Today it stands as a monument to his memory.

His successors were Rev's. Francis H. Hill and Jesse B. Colbert, both brilliant scholars, also Rev. J. P. McEntoch the orator. The dignified Christian gentleman, Rev. R. J. Daniels, again served faithfully.

The present pastor, Rev. W. H. Snowden, has been with us one year and he is indeed a successful financier, a great reasoner and an able pulpit orator.

J. B. Baltimore

Editor's Note: While it is impossible to list all the delegates to the 1900 General Conference we have listed a few picked at random:

Alabama Conf., Central Ala., North Ala: Revs. J. W. Cooper, Joseph Gomez, J. H. Manley, A. J. Rodgers, L. D. Workman, William Spencer, S. P. Collins. Lay delegates included: Prof. D. W. Parker, Mrs. S. H. Terrell, Miss Mary E. Strong.

From Allegheny came Rev. M. S. Kell, Dr. W. D. Clinton; Ark., Rev. G. W. Walter and Prof. H. D. Douglas. From Blue Ridge, the late Rev. P. H. Williams and a W. H. Keaton. California sent Rev.

Tilman Brown and Mrs. L. D. Bynum while the Central North Carolina had its J. M. Hill, J. W. Thomas, J. H. Mattock, T. B. McCain along with a Mr. W. H. Haywood.

The Rev. G. W. Gaines came from Florida along with Aaron Brown while T. H. Merriweather and a Prof. S. W. Vancleve came from Kentucky. Prof. W. F. Fonville represented the Liberian Conf. while Rev. W. W. Matthews came from Louisiana. Michigan and Canada sent the Rev. J. W. Powell, Missouri; Rev. R. E. Wilson, North Carolina, W. J. Moore, William Sutton, H. H. Bingham and J. H. Love along with Prof. G. W. Herring.

From North Georgia came Rev. W. D. Smith and Mrs. Sallie Hamilton. North Louisiana sent Rev. D. J. Adams and a Mr. J. M. Sims while New York elected Rev. W. H. Decker, Mark Anthony Bradley, W. H. Newby and a Mr. F. M. Moultrie. W. H. Coffee came from New England, W. H. Davenport from New Jersey, G. W. Lewis from Ohio, H. H. Jackson from Oklahoma.

The Philadelphia and Baltimore Conference elected the Rev. W. H. Snowden, R. A. Fisher, Logan Johnson and W. H. Holland along with Prof. J. B. Scott. The Rev. S. T. Meek, Y. J. P. Cohen and a Mr. C. C. Cohen came from Palmetto with F. Killingsworth, J. H. Jackson coming from South Carolina. South Georgia sent R. I. Apostle and a Mrs. Lucy Williams while G. W. Maize came from South Florida. P. R. Pitman came from Texas. S. P. Cooke and J. W. Wood from Virginia, W. G. Strong and R. A. Morrissey from West Alabama, and R. B. Bruce, G. C. Clement, M. V. Marable, H. L. Simmons along with a Mr. W. W. Smith came from Western North Carolina. Western New York sent S. I. Corrothers, H. J. Callis and a Mr. E. A. U. Brooks while West Tenn. and Mississippi sent Rev. S. C. Harris, A. P. Petty.

Evidently in this 21st session of the General Conference lay delegates were limited to two from each annual conference.

---

In President Eisenhower's speech in Deering Meadow he identified himself as "not only this nation's Chief Executive whose days are largely devoted to the efforts of the government to secure peace," but as a "single member of one of the constituent bodies of this Council of Churches". "But," he added, "I must speak also, inescapably, as one who has seen at first hand the almost miraculous battlefield achievements of men bound together by mighty devotion to a worthy cause"



## THE NEED FOR A CLEAR INTERPRETATION OF OUR TASK

In recent months we have seen instances of some attempts at rationalism on this matter of church deflection. Among the three or four reasons given has been that of welfare. We are not here attempting to refute any statement but we do feel that there is just cause for investigation. For some time now many leaders of the church have been aware of quiet efforts to wean memberships away from the established churches. This has been a matter of more than average attention on our part for it appears that in so doing we are accomplishing nothing but are actually setting up a state of affairs against the future, and more especially, against the spirit of Jesus.

The *Review* has little respect for any organization involved in *raiding* other organizations for those who occupy their time in these activities are telling the world that direct conversion on the part of the *raider* is an impossible feat. More than that we are setting up areas of doubt in the minds of those who could be styled *fringe* members. While at the present time this nation (and our group) enjoys the great advantage of an overwhelming number of *believers* in the Church another generation's attitude could easily change the whole picture.

The great battle for liberty and freedom of the dark skinned peoples of this country is entering the final stages. In this fight the Negro church has been in the forefront. It has stood in the gap—holding out hope—inspiring courage—utilizing its facilities and its resources to the end that second-class citizenship is on the way out.

During all those long years of privation this church has provided the best available schools, fought unceasingly to break down the racial barriers in our labor unions—called time after time on Christian America to be really Christian—to the moment when being an American is much more a joy than it was even twenty-five years ago.

It appears to this Editor that too often individuals are observed going around the country painting the Negro Church in as poor a light as possible—likening themselves to a foolish strato-liner pilot who, once having left the ground, jettisons his landing wheels as having no more need of them. In fact, one can be justified in the claim that too many articles appearing in our Negro periodicals and papers are unfavorable to the Church. The thing that hurts is that the writers of the articles would be, in many cases, unlettered folk no

matter where we were trained, South or North, were it not for the educational pioneering efforts of our churches, for the fight for opportunity began in some church—or some church-related school, or college.

As an unofficial spokesman for one denomination the *Review* is quick to admit that the church as we know it has had its faults. There have been times when she was exploited—when poor leadership manned some of her churches. There have been times when her best effort, in the light of today's action, was a seemingly poor one. But we should never forget that poor action or great action, the result is usually the measurement of capabilities at the time—and willingness at the time.

The Negro church has been our Spiritual voice but more than that—she has had to concern herself with every area of human experience. As she has struggled to improve family life she has had to recognize economic limitations and while establishing her line of activity in that light, insist on wider horizons. While thinking of a man's soul she has been aware of his heart—instilling courage and faith to the point that we know that color is no barrier to opportunity. Few churches have faced a task such as this, and because the task has been great, leadership may have faltered.

Many who have heard the call to Christian Service, many who could have made a magnificent contribution, turned away because of low salaries and physical hardship. Some who heard and answered have proved unworthy—the same as some who heard the Master's Call. But many, unafraid, undaunted, have left their impact on American life. To those thousands we owe our respect and our honor.

---

### WE NEED A CLEAR INTERPRETATION OF OUR TASK.

Perhaps there are those who would like to see the church embark on a wider plane of service. No doubt many have fondly wished for pioneering efforts along many lines. There is a great battle to be fought in the untouched area of hospitalization but it must be known that costs of these ventures cannot be met through the limited giving many of us have been adjusted to. Perhaps the church has failed to

get over to individuals the limited resources which have been hers over the years for it is in this area that critics become full voiced. The ZION Church, in its connectional budget, can count on approximately 50c from each member (average). You cannot work miracles with 50c at today's prices. True, there may be, as there certainly is in all churches, flourishing congregations and well-paid ministers. Some of these churches are meeting vital needs. Others may have restricted viewpoints. In instances our building projects have not returned dollar for dollar but it should be understood that few congregations can boast of a fair share of hard-headed business men.

WHAT ARE WE WILLING TO PAY FOR? That, to this Editor is a major question. The church can find areas of significant leadership, and we believe she is willing to go on pioneering—if her people will follow. The day is one calling for more than routine giving. Are we beggars or Christians still aware of the true significance of the gift of God's Son?

---

### NEEDED! HIGH VISION AND COURAGE

If there is any one thing that one gets as he observes the Church it is the firm knowledge that unless we are to come upon days of sackcloth and ashes, we must rediscover high vision and courage. The Church is now entering a period most favorable to her advancement—the economic status of her people is at a high level—the emphasis on trained leadership is widely accepted—the important role of the laymen is being recognized.

That which appears to be lacking is the reluctance to venture—the unwillingness to lift our eyes to broader concepts, new fields, greater endeavor.

From one section of the Church to another there is an insistent call to be about our Father's business—to venture—to seize rich opportunities to create a greater denomination—to lose self in rewarding work. In some areas the ears of our leadership have been opened and the Church moves forward. In others—faint hearts abound. In at least a dozen growing centers Zion faces rich fields of labor. Most of us can only hope and pray that high vision and courage will prevail.

One has only to recall the founding of such churches as St. Paul



Cleveland; Caldwell Temple, Columbus, Ohio; Hood and Greater Hood in New York; Caldwell of the Bronx; Goler Metropolitan of Winston-Salem; Good Samaritan in Erie, Pennsylvania; St. Paul (and others) in Detroit; Martin Temple, Chicago; Madison Temple, Richmond; Clinton Chapel, Montgomery; Ozark, Alabama, and Kansas City, Missouri;—great tasks of rebuilding at Petty, in New Orleans; Blair Street in Jackson, Mississippi, or Memphis, Tennessee,—the earlier relocation of First Church in Brooklyn (to mention a few)—to catch a clear understanding of *high vision and courage*. And other challenges await us.

This year Virginia Conference completes its mortgage payments on Madison Temple, laying the ground work for another great church such as Hood Temple or Metropolitan. We wonder where Virginia would be without its high courage and vision; the Western North Carolina Conference in its relocation of two of its great churches in Charlotte, the Pacific Coast and its dogged determination, Baltimore—Alexandria—Trinity in Washington—Springfield and Roxbury, Massachusetts—Albany and others.

The fields are ripe unto harvest, for Zion has too many big cities with one church.

---

“A thousand experiences have convinced me beyond room for doubt that common and fervent dedication to a noble purpose multiplies the strength of the individuals and the body and brings within the scope of their capabilities almost any conceivable objective.”

“Today, now the campaign for a just and lasting peace desperately needs the lifting and transforming power that comes from men and women, the world over, responding to their highest allegiances and their best motives.”

—From speech of President Eisenhower in Deering Meadow.

## LOOKING AHEAD IN BOOKS

For a great many years this Editor has had the idea that the high Holy Day of Christmas along with the Advent Season has provided more gains for our commercial world than it has spiritual benefits for our churches. To no small extent this has been the fault of the ministry and the churches. In instances the people make little or no preparation for the season, except for, perhaps, a children's program and a special number or two from the choir. For months now, commercial interests have been busy preparing for the ingathering of dollars by pushing the idea of gifts for others. The church, too, needs to look ahead to thorough preparation that Christ might again be a part of Christmas.

The giving of gifts is now so far advanced in this nation of ours that we can but hope to bring an *age of reason* to the system. Certainly a good place to begin would be in the realm of books.

Churches can do a great service by urging people to really plan for Christ at the festive season. One place to begin would be with the community setting as well as on the family level for surely, if Christmas means anything it brings the rich idea of the full family circle. We recall how wonderful the season used to be with the month ahead planning of our own family group and the guidance we had in our little two-room school—the making of tree decorations, the singing of carols, the early reading of the story by St. Luke. At home there were the butchering days which had to precede cookie making and doughnut making. There were the fruit cakes and mince meat and the excursions of children into the woods to seek for the perfect tree. Even before these days arrived, there was the search for walnuts and butternuts, etc. So what would be more in keeping than a movement to get churches and communities and families to begin planning away back around the first of November? Children could be read portions of the book “All About Christmas” by Mamie R. Krythe, to be followed by such stories as “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer” by Robert L. May, or “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer Shines Again” by the same author. Others which might be used are: “Let's Keep Christmas” by Peter Marshall, “The Tall Book of Christmas” selected by Dorothy Hall Smith, “Little Boy Down the Lane” by Grace Noel Crowell or “The Little Serving Maid” by the same author. At the same time do not forget the traditional ones such as “The Night Before Christmas”

by Clement C. Moore, "The Story of The Other Wise Man" by Henry Van Dyke and the Christmas Story itself from the Gospels of St. Luke and St. Matthew. But back to our opening time-planning: other books are available for those who wish ideas: "Christmas Make-It Book" by Barbara Baer, "Holiday Flower Arrangements" edited by Emma H. Cyphers, "Christmas Idea Book" by Dorothy Biddle and Dorothea Bloom, "Make Your Own Merry Christmas" by Anne Wertsner or "Party Decorations For Christmas and Other Occasions" by Patricia Easterbrook Roberts.

In the realm of gifts the Editor is intrigued by "Miss Flora McFlimsey and Little Laughing Water," one of a series by Mariana (for the very young) "Stories That Never Grow Old" by Watty Piper (for 5 and up), "Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle's Farm" by Betty MacDonald (one of the easy-to-read stories), "The Sugarbush Family" by Miriam E. Mason (7-13 years), "With Dad Alone" by Jerrold Beim (8-12 years), "Haunt Fox" by Jim Kjelgaard and "The Phantom Deer" by Joseph Wharton Lippincott. For that young miss we would recommend a work of some years ago "Strictly Confidential" or "Date Data" by Beverly Brandow or for the young man "Plain Talk For Men Under 21" by Allen Ludden.

Then there are the Bible Stories or the Bible itself such as "A Small Child's Bible by Pelagie Deane and Mary Alice Jones, "Bible Stories," The Illustrated Revised Standard Version for young people or any one of the numerous other Bibles or Testaments.

---

Let the Church speak to the world today as the prophets of old spoke to their world, and the world will listen, President Dwight Eisenhower told a throng of 18,000 churchmen gathered in Deering Meadow on Northwestern Campus Thursday afternoon, August 19, during the World Council of Churches meeting. The occasion was a special convocation of the University in connection with the World Council Assembly. The outdoor ceremony held in the sunlit "meadow" was made colorful by a dignified academic processional led by the World Council presidents.



## IN AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS

*Films and Filmstrips for the Christmas Season*

Two great days on the Methodist Christian Calendar loom ahead. In many ways these days bring to the minister concern as to how best observe them. Christmas and the traditional Watch Night Services are not only important but their tone oftentimes sets the pace for Church activity in the period prior to Ash Wednesday.

The church which is fortunate enough to have good audio-visual equipment can find many ways to keep enthusiasm at high pitch. With the emphasis placed on the commercial end of the season such a procedure is necessary if the community is not to lose sight of the basic spiritual nature of the day.

Among the 16mm sound motion pictures which are available are the following:

*The Little Match Girl* (which can be purchased for around \$21.00) a heart-warming story of a little girl who finds a world of love and laughter and even the happy promise of a better life ahead.

*The Nativity* (15 minutes), *Child of Bethlehem* (15 minutes), *Holy Night* (30 minutes), *Silent Night* (13 minutes), *Birth of The Savior* (15 minutes), *Childhood of Jesus* (15 minutes), *A Savior is Born* (15 minutes), *The King of Kings* (15 minutes), *Star in the Night* (20 minutes), *Christmas Rhapsody* (10 minutes), *The Night Before Christmas* (10 minutes), *Brightest Night* (5 minutes).

A church which wishes to make use of 16mm films must remember two things: that prices go up at this season of the year and early booking will insure your film when you want it. It is for that reason that The Editor suggests the purchase of such films as *The Little Match Girl* and *The Night Before Christmas* which can be shown year after year with a wonderful retention of interest.

*Filmstrips*

Again the cheapness of filmstrips (and their ownership) can go a long way in providing for both young and old the proper Christian slant during the Advent and Christmas season. The Editor likes (as

he has said before) that wonderful new filmstrip for young and old *Christmas Around the World*. In these days when we are endeavoring to get over to our people the world church this filmstrip fits well in such a program. Coming with recordings the filmstrip is a gay full-color one, of use both with young and older groups. Children soon have a firm understanding of the place of many of our Christmas customs.

For those who are casting about for a different Christmas party do not overlook the filmstrip *Christmas Party*. The Editor tried the strip with an adult group the past year with very gratifying results. This year we expect to use *Gather Around The Christmas Tree* as a tree dedication service.

The churches who have either purchased filmstrips or slides of the season can find a ready use for the slides on the Nativity and older filmstrips such as *Christopher Mouse*, *The Shepherd's Watch*, *A Christmas Carol*, *When The Littlest Camel Knelt* and others.

For the emphasis on Family Life the Editor likes the featuring of two albums by the Methodist Publishing House: *Six Stories From the Bible* and *Christmas Carols Album*.

### *Watch Night*

For your Watch-Night Services think about the use of some one of the following: *The Neighbor Next Door* (16mm sound), *The Family Altar* (16mm sound), *John Wesley* (16mm sound), *I Beheld His Glory* (16mm sound), *Toymaker* (16mm sound), *Reaching From Heaven* (16mm sound).

---

## REVIEWING THE NEWS

America went to the polls in November, returning at least three Negroes to Congress, upsetting stalwart Republicans, disappointing hopeful Democrats but voting in very gratifying and impressive numbers. No doubt the increase was due to the efforts on the part of Banks and Business interests in general, as well as the usual party advocates *at getting out the vote*. Let us hope the growing awareness of voting responsibility will continue.







